

THE KOREAN REPOSITORY.

APRIL, 1896.

FATHER COSTE,

MISSIONNAIRE APOSTOLIQUE.

Translated from the French by Mrs. Alexander Kenmure.

Born ----- April 17th, 1842.
Left France, July 15th, 1868.
Died ----- February 28th, 1896.

THE Korean mission has just lost one of her most worthy workers in the person of "Good Father Coste," for it is under this name that our pro-vicar was for long known and venerated by all his colleagues and numerous friends, missionaries as well as laymen, in the Far East.

God has called him to Himself in the 54th year of his age, after twenty-eight years of apostolic labours. No other missionary in Korea had yet had so long a career. All so far, had been carried away, the greater part in the flower of life, the others comparatively young, either by hardship and disease, or by the iron hand of persecution. Thus we rejoiced in the hope that he, at least, like another John, whose name and whose virtues he recalled, would yet remain long in the midst of this young Korean Church, to console her, by a beautiful and green old age, for the repeated sorrows which have so cruelly afflicted her during many years. The good God had ordained otherwise. May His holy will be done and not ours!

With Father Coste there disappears from our midst a figure truly venerable and sympathetic, around which all breathed peace, amiability, modesty, charity, and an undisturbed union of the soul with God. Now that he is no more, it seems as if death had placed upon his brow a kind of auriole, and the mildness of his countenance, nobly framed in a crown of white hair and grey beard, recalls those beautiful heads of monks to which the pencil

of the artist has given so much of peace, of tranquil light and of heavenly serenity. For in the picture of this priestly life there is, so to say, no shadow. Whether one examines it as a whole or in its details, one finds neither blemish nor shortcoming; it is a sequence of full days where all was orderly and in its own place.

He followed a plan and a method in all his acts; everything was done by rule and measure. Yet this regularity had in it nothing of narrowness; his rule was never rigid, but gentle, after the manner of St. Francis de Sales—knowing how to bend to circumstances without wounding or offending anyone. Like a limpid stream which follows its course and quietly turns aside all obstacles without injuring them, whose flow nothing can arrest, and whose surface nothing can trouble, so, for more than a quarter of a century, flowed this missionary life, the harmonious unity of which can only be explained by a constant vigilance and a continual victory over nature, with a special outpouring of the grace of God. A man so well regulated in all his conduct could not be simply sincere and upright, he was also full of goodness. It was possible to abuse his kindness of heart; to exhaust it or to find it at fault, never. He said nothing but good of anyone; of the faults and eccentricities of others he spoke so little as to seem unaware of them, so that one asked if he had never in his heart a drop of gall, in his mouth a sharp or bitter word against anyone.

Let it be for those, and they are numerous, who have known intimately the venerated friend whom we weep, to say if this portrait is embellished or simply faithful. Perhaps they might find with justice that the principal feature is wanting in it; namely, the signet of perfection, the appearance of completeness, the finish stamped upon all his works, even the most ordinary. To do everything in order, with care and to the best of his ability, all for God, is not this, in three words, the whole *mán*. *Bene omnia fecit.*

Monsieur Eugéne Jean Georges Coste was born on April 17th, 1842, at Montarnaud, in the district of Aniane, and the department of Hérault, of an honorable family of landowners, endowed by fortune with wealth, rich above all in the gifts of faith. His father died long ago; his pious mother still lives. A sister, herself a widow, dwells with her in the native village, and supplies to the venerable octogenarian the place of the absent. An uncle, M. Marcellin Coste, notary at Montpellier, an active christian, of influence in the country, much in union with the bishop of the diocese, appears in the letters of the missionary to have been even up to these last years the confidential agent and man of business, as it were the head and the right arm of the whole family.

The village of Montarnaud, of which the paternal mansion occupies the centre, is situated about twelve miles from Montpellier, in a smiling valley which surrounds a circle of hills planted with vines and olive-trees. An old castle, perched on the eminence, dominates the village. It was in this picturesque environment, where without doubt his artistic tastes were awakened, that the future missionary grew up, under the eye of God and of his pious parents; and to the end he retained the sweet recollection of it.

"Do you remember," he writes to a cousin less than a year before his death, "the time when the young school-boys, after having frolicked on the banks of the river or on the mountains of Madières, would return joyously to the paternal roof? I seem still to see the large bridge which joined the Gard to the Hérault and the rocks which no one dared to climb except the goats which went to browse upon the blades of grass and the branches of the trees. I remember above all the charming scenes when the united family, tasted the joys of the most cordial friendship. After the evening repast, they would make me get up on a table, and there I would deliver the pieces which I had learnt at school. One can hardly doubt that these first efforts in oratory were as the prelude to the ministry which I was to exercise later."

Did he already suspect it himself, and was it in this time of early childhood that he heard the call of God? His great discretion has not allowed this to be known. At any rate, it is certain that his apostolic vocation goes back at least to the period of his early student days. It was in the glowing atmosphere of Belmont, in the diocese of Rodez, where a good part of his studies were conducted, that he developed the germs of it; it was there that in company with his pious co-disciples, of whom several have become missionaries like himself, that he entertained and nourished his desire to leave home for the mission-field. The venerable mother of M. Coste has not yet forgotten the origin of the calling of her son, she who, less than six years ago, still accused, altho without rancour, Father Chibaudel, now Superior of the seminary of Biévres "of having stolen, at Belmont, her well-beloved Jean."

On finishing his humanities, M. Coste entered the Theological Seminary at Montpellier, directed by Messieurs les Lazaristes, where he received first orders. The humble and modest piety, the simplicity of the sons of St. Vincent de Paul, especially of M. Fiat, whom he there had as professor, made a profound impression on him. He never spoke of it save with respect and admiration. It may not be too much to attribute to their lessons and their example that spirit of gentleness which afterwards

made of him so good a man. At the close of 1868, he entered the Seminary of Foreign Missions, was ordained priest on the 6th of June, 1868, that is to say, after a sojourn of less than two years at the Rue du Bac, and on July 15th following, refusing himself the joy of going to embrace his family for the last time, he quitted Paris and France, and embarked for the Far East.

His talents and his qualities, the amenity of his character, the taste for order, for regularity, for work, which distinguished him even then, had recommended him to the choice of his Superiors for the important service of the business agencies of the Society. The young missionary was silent as to his personal preferences, and with that good grace which doubles the merit of obedience, and which he was always ready to employ, he gave himself up with all his heart to the duties of his charge, the more meritorious as it is generally little coveted. Thus it is that we meet him, in a space of eight years, first as Assistant-Business-manager at Hong-Kong, fighting his first battles under Monseigneur Osouf; then at Singapore, towards the end of 1870, where he took the place for two years of Father Patriat then engaged in the founding of the Sanatorium; again at Hong-Kong in 1872, when he tried his talents as an architect, and borrowed from the clever builders of Béthanie that taste for Gothic art—a little exclusive perhaps—which he always retained. At last in 1874 he was appointed Business Agent at Shanghai, in spite of the opposition offered by his own humility, and ended by finding in this post the path to Korea.

What he was in these various positions, the testimonies of his Superiors and of the Committee in Paris, the profound and lasting friendships which he inspired, above all the regrets which accompanied his departure from the *Procure* are sufficient evidence. No one could help loving a man so affable, so prepossessing, ever ready to be of service and finding all his happiness in pleasing others. His dignified bearing compelled respect, his frank good fellowship gave confidence, his equable disposition, grave without severity and jovial without levity, pleased everyone. He knew how to take a joke, returning it on occasion with interest, but altho his wit was pointed it never wounded because always charitable. The only thing one feared in him was his pencil. Yet the victims of his caricatures would complain of his mischievousness in terms more fit to excite raillery than repentance. "Ah indeed," writes one of them to him; "you have a fine reckoning to pay for all your misdeeds. What do you say about it, our dear Father Coste? You say very innocently in the depth of your simplicity, that it can have nothing to do with you, and that

those with whom it lies to clear themselves with regard to these frightful pictures may do so." "Sure enough, you will be hanged for your pictures," writes another; "in fact, I have always thought that you would come to a bad end. Seriously, listen to me, my friend, for after all, I still love you a little. Amend your way; there is perhaps time yet." And he himself, announcing to one of his best friends his approaching departure from the *Procure*, humorously alludes to "his horrible sketches" and congratulates a certain "Papa Malakoff" on being henceforth delivered from his "frightful persecutor," with a touch of gaiety which one is glad to find in all his correspondence as in all his life. After all, this note of joy is far from surprising in so saintly a being; for if he knew that piety is useful to all, neither did he ignore that the joy of the Spirit, which is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, must accompany it in a missionary. "Ibant gaudentes," and this is why he was able to show himself joyful even at a time when, believing himself called in another direction, his life as business agent weighed upon him, and after long and cruel uncertainty, he ended by resolving to beg his Superiors to relieve him of a charge from which the release itself would be to him an occasion of great sacrifice.

"It is indeed most true," he wrote on this subject to Father Osouf, now Archbishop of Tokio, "that there are sometimes great disturbances in one's life. We have experienced them, and we have each our share of them. Then, another separation. By submission to them, it seems as if the heart should become inured to them, nevertheless, it is not so. There are some affections from which the heart can never depart, and that which attaches me to you is one of those which are imperishable; neither the distance, about to increase, which lies between us, nor the colds of Korea, are capable of lessening it." Then after this heart cry, and as if to hide the wound, a joyful reflection: "I constantly see myself again in the good old times at Hong-Kong, with Papa Osouf and the good Narcisse, discussing the buildings of Béthanie. What a trio, to be sure! Who would have said we would so soon be at the two ends of the earth? Mgr. de Béthanie, it is true, still remains, in the centre, as a bond of union. He is one of those who should go to heaven in a chariot, altho he has not gained the prize here. He is quite cross and almost cheeky to me. It is atrocious! He wants to make me regret going to Korea, that vestibule of Paradise to those missionaries who go there on foot."

It was in truth, the purest apostolic spirit, the simple and unique love of the Cross, which inclined the heart of Father Coste towards Korea, and made him yearn after this persecuted Mission. The letter, dated Sept. 25th, 1875, in which he requested

of Messieurs les Directeurs du Séminaire de Paris to be admitted to it, paints too well the state of his heart not to be quoted in part.

"In our Society," he says, "every post is good, all work together for the conversion of the Gentiles, which is our aim; we are all combined; the merits of one are reflected upon the others. . . . I know that; I am convinced of it; and yet I have not been able to silence an inward voice which says to me: "Go, preach the Word of God. For long I have repulsed this suggestion as a snare laid by the Evil One to make me lose the tranquillity of my soul. I have meditated, I have consulted, I have prayed. The same voice always makes itself heard. If it invited me to a life of greater softness, greater ease, I would regard it as a temptation; but it urges me towards privations, towards sufferings, towards the Cross. It may be the voice of God. Now the voice of God may not be despised, even when it is alone in its counsel." Then after having tried, on account of his assumed inaptitude for business, to incline the will of his Superiors to grant his request, "You will find me perhaps," he continues, "very bold to wish thus to usurp the heritage of the apostles and martyrs, very presumptuous to assume so formidable a responsibility. Assuredly, if I considered only my unworthiness and my weakness I would beware of making this application. But St. Paul teaches us that of a vessel of dis-honor God can make an elect vessel. There is nothing in me to cause me to glory, but I expect all of Him who strengthens me, of Him, who is the author of good thoughts and holy enterprises. In yielding to the irresistible force which urges me, I believe I am obeying the voice of God. Also I beseech you, Messieurs et Vénérés Directeurs, not to be insensible to a request which I make after mature deliberation, and for which I have awaited only a favorable opportunity. By his prayers and tears St. Boniface obtained from his Superiors permission to go and preach the faith to the Germans. Permit yourself to be equally moved by the supplication of one who without doubt falls short of being a saint, but who has the will to become one. By a long series of sacrifices, with patience and self-abnegation, I have arrived at the threshold of mission work: I have to take but one step to enter upon it, and that depends on you. I think that you will remove for me the last obstacle that remains, that you will make smooth my path."

Touched by language so lofty and so sincere, the Committee in Paris yielded to the desire of Father Coste, and in a letter dated Nov. 29th, 1876, accorded him the permission asked for, notwithstanding the regret they felt at losing him for the *Procure*, thanking him at the same time for the devotion he had showed in the service of the Society and of the Mission. The letter finished by hoping that he might soon be able to enter Korea.

This wish, alas! was not to be quickly realised, and the new missionary to Korea kept guard for nearly ten years over the approaches to his mission, before he was able to enter the Promised Land.

Monseigneur Ridel received with lively joy a new member of his little apostolic family, and in a letter of March 18th, 1876, expressed his gratitude to Providence for this unexpected assistance, which to him would be very precious. Some months later, after several fruitless attempts, he had the happiness to introduce two missionaries, Fathers Blanc and Deguette, to Korean soil, for ten years deprived of apostles. Father Coste, in the autumn of the same year, went to take their place in Manchuria at Notre Dame des Neiges, in company of the pious Bishop and of Father Richard. His arrival was opportune. Monseigneur Ridel was in process of putting the finishing touches to the Korean-French Dictionary composed by him and his missionaries during the enforced leisure of exile. He entrusted the work of collation and the care of the printing of this important work to Father Coste. He could not have made a better choice. The year 1877 passed with Father Coste in the copying of the dictionary, and in the study of Korean, the knowledge of which became indispensable to enable him to do his work well. As soon as his manuscript was ready, he prepared to leave Manchuria to seek in Japan the material means for carrying out the undertaking. The remote village of Tchakeou possessed in fact nothing of all that was necessary for the printing of a voluminous work, much less for the casting of typographical characters which up to that time had had no existence.

In the beginning of March, 1878, Mgr. Ridel, who had returned to Korea only a few months before, was discovered in a suburb of Seoul, and imprisoned in the capital. This misfortune did not detain Father Coste, who only heard of it later at Chefoo. Two ways presented themselves to him; that of New-chwang where there was already a service of steamers to Shanghai, but the river was still closed and blocked by ice, and that of the little port of Tcouang-hen, a day's journey from Notre Dame des Neiges, where one could get cargo and fishing boats, and which had hitherto been the point of departure of all missionary expeditions to Korea. Father Coste, to save time, chose the latter. In ordinary weather three days sufficed for crossing the strait to Chefoo. Thanks to contrary winds, the voyage lasted nearly three weeks, during which they had to make acquaintance with the sea, and, for want of other provisions, with the poor bowl of millet of the Chinese sailors. When the Father reached

Chefoo, the second or third steamer from New-chwang was on the point of leaving for Shanghai; he went on board and passed from there to Japan.

This country had since 1875 concluded a treaty and entered into relations with the "Hermit kingdom." Her ships and her merchants were beginning to land there, and one already fore-saw that the missionaries might here soon find easier means of penetrating into Korea. Father Coste then established himself in Yokohama. He found himself almost at home, within two steps of the good Mgr. Osouf, his bosom friend, beneath the hospitable roof of Father Midon and within reach of a French printing-office. This was all that he could wish for. He set himself at once to the work. By his care, from his designs, and under his directions, were made the first movable types of the Korean language, and it is to him, in the main, that the honor of their diffusion belongs, since all those in use from that time in Japanese and other printing-offices are little more than the reproduction of the triple model which he adopted for his matrices. The Korean alphabet consisting of twenty-five letters, it would seem easy, at first sight, to compose a complete font of characters; but practically it is not so. The Korean language is not written in separate letters, but in groups of syllables, which in writing appear to form so many distinct characters—from which it follows that an entire font numbers more than 1400 of these groups. There was, then, this number of characters to engrave and to cause to be cast before the printing of a book could be thought of and this was no light task. The *Dictionnaire Coréen Francais* appeared in 1880. The value of this work is known, and its typographical correctness is as perfect as was possible. The year following were published, the "*Grammaire Coréenne*" and a manual of prayers in four volumes for the use of native Christians.

This important task, or, as he himself laughingly said, this series of trials happily ended, there was nothing more to keep Father Coste in Yokohama. In the autumn of 1881, Mgr. Ridel visited Japan, to open, if possible, from that side easier communication with his mission, always so isolated. Nagasaki appeared to him to be the most favorable point for the establishment of a kind of provisional business agency for the needs of Korea. To this office he called Father Coste, who accepted it with his usual good grace. This new stage on the way to his chosen mission field lasted four years. He made the sacrifice, and the warm welcome of Mgr. Petitjean and of all his missionaries contributed not a little to ameliorate its bitterness. At Nagasaki, Father Coste took up again his trade of printer, and train-

ed several Christians in this kind of Korean work. Several religious works were published, and this apostleship of books which he exercised consoled the good Father for not being able to go and preach the word of truth to the heathen.

However, Korea emerged little by little from its secular isolation, and if the barriers which closed it so strictly from the entry of missionaries did not fall all at once, with time openings were made sufficient to allow one or two Catholic priests to pass in each year. At last, by watching for an opportunity offered by Providence, Father Coste saw open before him, at the end of 1885, the doors of the Promised Land.

"Disguised as a layman," he himself relates, "I embarked on a Japanese steamer which, through the help of commercial treaties, had already carried several Europeans to Korea. Merchants trafficked and circulated freely, but missionaries were still compelled to make use of the most absolute *incognito*. When I arrived in Seoul it was still day, and I had to wait until the sun hid itself beneath the horizon; then, under the shade of twilight and falling night, to glide furtively to the residence of Mgr. Blanc, and even there, in our poor Korean houses, what precautions had we not to take in order to escape discovery! An opening door, the entrance of a water-carrier, was enough to alarm us; quickly we would seek refuge in the tiny apartment which served us for sleeping-chamber, so as to withdraw ourselves from compromising encounters. The work of the ministry was exercised principally during the night, and if the administration of Extreme Unction obliged us to go out during the day, it was necessary to screen ourselves in mourning-dress, a costume providentially suited to our needs, since it had the advantage of hiding even the face of him who wore it, and of rendering him unapproachable under the insignia of grief. Our seclusion began to be modified in 1886, and in 1887, when the French treaty was ratified, we were able to breathe the fresh air, and the cassock made its first appearance in the streets of the capital. This date marks the resurrection of our dear Korean Church, which emerged little by little from its tomb, as the Church of Rome came forth from the catacombs."

At the time of his entry into Korea, Father Coste was already forty-three years of age, too old for him to be able seriously to exercise the ministry in the provinces. His health would not long have been able to resist the *régime* of hardship which of necessity was then the daily lot of the missionary living, without possible amelioration, the life of a native. He possessed besides a store of knowledge and of special aptitudes which rendered his presence in Seoul most useful, if not absolutely essential.

Mgr. Blanc, who had just succeeded Mgr. Ridel, recently deceased in France, made a point of keeping him near himself, that he might have the benefit of his services, and in 1886 made him his private chaplain.

The conclusion of the Franco-Korean treaty, in giving to the French missionaries the right of holding property, of building and residing in the Capital and in the open ports, and of travelling freely and openly thro the whole country, opened a new era to the Catholic religion. It imposed also new duties. As long as the Church of Korea had been forced by persecution to dwell in the shade, there had been no question of, nor need for, common establishments which would have drawn attention to and at the same time endangered her existence; in taking her place in the light of the sun, she could no longer dispense with a place to shelter herself and all the other material means necessary for the development of a visible Society. Churches, oratories, residences for the Bishop, and for the missionaries, a seminary, an office for the transaction of business, schools, orphanages, all were wanting, but all became necessary while they were yet to create. Under the direction of the two Bishops, whose zeal and whose purposes he always so faithfully seconded, Father Coste for ten years was, as one may say, the main-spring of all these important operations. He established the printing office, which in this interval has provided the mission with some thirty books of religion in the native language, some of which have passed through successive editions of several thousand copies. After the purchase of the property of Yyong-hyen, wrested, so to say, by force, from the unwilling and distrustful officials then in power, he engaged himself actively in levelling the site of the future church of Seoul. In 1887, a hill was almost razed to enlarge the plateau; in 1888, a temporary chapel was built and opened for services; the year following, the Episcopal residence was nearly completed, and quite close to the Bishop's palace, an establishment was given to the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, large enough to accommodate a noviciate of native nuns, and an orphanage which soon numbered about two hundred children. The seminary of Ryong-san rose from the ground in 1891, at a distance of one mile from the Capital, and an elegant church, the first in Korea, dedicated to St. Joseph, crowned the heights of Yak-hyen in the populous suburb which stretches itself outside the South Gate. About the same time Chemulpo became possessed of its missionary residence—without mentioning the house for the Sisters—and the church, both nearly finished, which have since been added. Mgr. Mutel, in the spring of 1892, had the joy of being able to lay and to bless at Seoul the first stone of the Cathedral

which will remain Father Coste's greatest achievement. It is in the Gothic style, with three aisles, in the form of a Latin cross, pure and simple in taste. Of an exterior measurement of sixty-five meters in length, and twenty meters in width, it is capable of accommodating nearly three thousand worshippers. A beautiful clerestory extends the whole length of the principal aisle. When the cross which is to crown the belfry shall carry to a height of more than forty meters in the air the sacred symbol of redemption, one may venture to affirm that this church will not be the least ornament of the Capital, and will give to this whole pagan population an exalted idea of the God of the Christians. Wherefore was it that the lamented dead had not given to him the time to complete this beautiful work, into which he had put all his talents and all his heart!

But let us leave here the architect, too soon taken from his work, to follow his other labors. The death of Mgr. Blanc, deceased 21st February, 1890, placed Father Coste, in his capacity of chaplain to the Bishop, at the head of the mission until the election of a new Bishop. The bereavement of the Church of Korea lasted a year, a period of trial to the worthy Superior, for he ceased not to sigh for the day when he should be delivered from a charge so painful to his modesty. He had little liking for the exercise of authority; one felt that it troubled him more to command than to obey. A fear, perhaps excessive, of personal responsibility which never left him, partly owing to his character, certainly also to the delicacy of his conscience, led him to mistrust beyond measure his own understanding and to rely too much on others. But this fault, if it was one, became almost a gift in a temporary administration, causing him to follow with wise reserve the line of conduct traced by the Vicar-Apostolic whose authority he carried on, and to avoid the errors of inopportune initiative which form the greatest peril of all *ad interim* incumbency.

At last the arrival of Mgr. Mutel, in bringing to a close the widowhood of the Korean Church, relieved Father Coste "from the burden of responsibility which caused such preoccupation," and gave him entirely to his books, to his building, and to his work in connection with the Ste. Enfance, for since the entry of the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres into Korea, he had naturally been appointed their chaplain. The Sisters had not only the care of a large number of orphans, they quickly found in Seoul the elements of a prosperous novitiate. To sustain and direct these souls in the path of perfection, to succeed in a ministry so lofty and so delicate, Father Coste had all the needful qualities,

maturity, wisdom, piety, discretion; he had above all, saintliness. He was able to preach all the Christian virtues with as much profit as authority, because he himself practiced them in so eminent a degree. Since his death there have been found several rough drafts of letters, too few, it is true, written by him during his last years, some to his family, some to souls in affliction, some to persons who had entered the religious life. Few as these writings are, they suffice to show the loftiness of his tenets, the beauty of the sentiments by which his soul was penetrated. His spirit of faith, his entire unselfishness, his contempt for the things of the earth, his union with God, his charity, shine forth in every page. To a cousin, who had just joined herself to the Bénédictines de Solesmes, and whom he congratulated upon this highly-favored vocation, he gives the most elevated counsels of perfection. He pictures to her the happiness of complete self-immolation, the sweetness of the life of contemplation and the thirst for sacrifice, in colours so vivid and so true that one feels that here indeed is a mind singularly engaged with the things of eternity, overflowing with the joy of belonging to God, and swimming, so to speak, in the deep and pure waters of Divine love.

Father Coste found the source of this ardent and tender piety in assiduous prayer. Only to see him repeat his breviary, recite his rosary, or pray in the chapel before the Holy Sacrament, made one feel more thoughtful. But it was above all in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice that his full fervour appeared. Even laymen have been on more than one occasion impressed by it, and one of them, a Frenchman who has left in Japan the reputation of a distinguished jurist, expressed the opinion of all when he said one day at the table of Mgr. Petitjean, "When I was spending the Sabbath in Yokohama, I liked to listen to the Mass as celebrated by Father Coste; it never appeared to me to be too long." Given in a judicious form, this is praise of no small value.

It cannot be said that the piety of dear Father Coste shone with a more than usually vivid luster upon the close of his life. As some delicate plants shun too much light, so his virtues shunned publicity. His special characteristic, on the contrary, has always been to make little of himself, to remain ever the same, solid, constant, modest, always perfectly balanced. Still, since his semi-jubilee as a priest, which in 1893 was made an occasion of rejoicing for the whole mission, he appeared to prolong his evening prayers beyond what had been customary with him. It became a rule for him to recite every day in their entirety the fifteen divisions of the rosary, no doubt meaning thereby to show

that he had put this new period of his sacerdotal life under the special protection of the Most Holy Virgin, towards whom he had had from childhood a peculiar devotion.

But alas! it was not to last long, this full life, and, contrary to all expectation, the good God was already preparing to crown His servant. There was nothing, however, to forewarn him of his approaching end, and altho always ready for death, he himself did not look for it so early. In a letter dated the 13th of last February, probably the last which he wrote, he announced thus to his sister the sending of a long-wished-for photograph: "You will perhaps have some difficulty in recognising the features of former times. Nevertheless, thanks be to God, my health is always flourishing. In spite of the years, my bald head and my beard, which is turning gray, they make out that I do not grow old."

It was true; for several years he appeared even to grow younger, and the brothers would have readily promised him twenty years of life. The regularity of his habits and the exemplary manner of living which he followed counted, it is true, for much in the maintenance of his health. Thanks to these precautions, he was very rarely indisposed, and always went on with his work without losing a moment, cheerful and alert as a young man. Only his sight began to fail in the end. Scarcely observable was a certain slowness of mind which sometimes required a slight effort in following the thread of a conversation, or in acquainting himself with the details of an affair. For one could not put down to old age the occasional attacks of somnolence which sometimes surprised him at table in the evening, especially the long winter evenings. This was a sin of youth which he himself candidly confessed, perhaps without any great contrition, certainly without the hope of overcoming it. There was, however, some improvement in this respect upon his time in Singapore, where he would sleep, as his letters gayly say, spoon in hand. For the rest, this sleep of the just, which formerly the typhoons of Hong-kong were powerless to disturb, could scarcely have been injurious to his health; it was a good sign rather than otherwise.

All then was going well, when, towards February 19th, after a short walk, he felt some slight feverish shiverings. As spring was approaching, this symptom did not at first alarm. He hoped that a good perspiration and a dose of quinine would cause it to disappear. Next day he went, as was his custom, to say Mass at the Orphanage of the Ste. Enfance. It was the last time, altho he knew it not, that he was to find himself in the midst of his little spiritual family. His dear orphans, almost all of whom he

had baptised, whom for eight years he had surrounded with care, were no more to see their good Father. On his return, he felt ill at ease; the rest of the day he was cold. The following night was restless. He refrained next day from the celebration of Holy Mass, but rose some hours later than usual and, wearying of being alone in his room, wished to go down with his confrères to the mid-day meal. But he was scarcely five minutes in the refectory when he suddenly changed color, and by the advice of Monseigneur, who was frightened by this sudden pallor, he consented to return to his chamber. He never left it again.

The doctor called in the afternoon—it was February 21st—and found a little fever. Next day, everything pointed to typhoid not apparently malignant. From Sabbath, the Japanese doctor visited the Father regularly twice daily, and followed with the greatest care the course of the disease, which for several days was normal, and the slightness of the increase of temperature in the patient, gave hopes of a cure. This was an illusion which lasted almost to the end. On Thursday morning, the Lady Superior of the Orphanage, who never left his bedside except at night, remarked an alarming change in his condition. Monseigneur apprized by letter the brethren at Yak-hyen and at Ryong-san that the danger without being imminent was yet serious enough to make it advisable not to delay too long the administration of the Sacraments. In the afternoon, the Father was warned of his condition, of which he was far from suspecting the gravity. With the docility of a child, he prepared his last confession, and notwithstanding some difficulty of speech, which made the accomplishment of this duty long and even painful, he was able to confess himself with complete clearness of mind. For the giving of Extreme Unction, Monseigneur waited for the arrival of Father Doucet, whom the sick man was still able to recognise. When all was ready for the administration of the Sacrament: "Would you not wish to receive Extreme Unction without further delay?" said His Grace to him. The Father made signs of assent, and the ceremony began. He appeared to give heed to what was passing, and to unite intelligently in the prayers of the Church. But when Monseigneur came to the office of Extreme Unction, the poor Father had already forgotten everything. On perceiving the hand of the Bishop placed upon his eyelids, there to trace with the holy oil the sign of the Cross, a sudden shock of fear and astonishment seem to pass thro his whole being; like a man who wakes from a painful dream and endeavours to collect his thoughts. Turning quickly upon the right side, he raised himself almost into a sitting posture, his head resting on his hand, and cast an anxious

look upon the company. This look was like a flash of light, a complete revelation. His face suddenly purpled, his eyes filled with tears. Assuredly it was for the poor Father the hour, the moment of sacrifice, a moment of intense suffering. To this holy one, whose life had been entirely for God, God doubtless wished to leave the final merit of acutely realising its loss, of fully measuring its sacrifice, and of acquiescing freely in its entire relinquishment. After this moment of anguish, calmness having returned, the dying man, raising his eyes towards a new country, gently reclined his body on the couch, and with an expression of faith and of profound prayer, gave himself to participation in the last ceremonies of Extreme Unction.

There was nothing further to keep him on earth. From this moment, death pursued its work. The poor Father, panting for breath, with closed eyes and lips parched by the fever, lay silent and motionless. One could with difficulty distinguish sometimes thro the painful breathing, the holy names of Jesus and of Mary, which he was unable clearly to articulate, but which served to prove that with what remnant of consciousness remained to him, the aspirations of his soul towards God were sustained by constant prayer. We repeated the prayers for the dying, believing that all hope of saving him was gone. But the agony was to be prolonged for twenty-four hours longer, during which the immobility, the oppression, the rattling in the throat continued. At last on Friday evening, after several stoppages of the breath which foretold the last sigh, the face of the dying was suddenly contorted as with an excess of pain; then the features resumed their natural expression. The Father had entered upon his eternal rest. It was a quarter to six on the evening of Friday, 28th February. As soon as the body was reclothed in the sacerdotal vestments, the Christians flocked in to pray around the bed of death. By the wish of all, the deceased was soon removed to be laid in state in a chamber apart. The women by day and the men by night, did not cease to chant the office for the dead before his remains, up to the hour of the funeral.

On Sunday, 1st March, at 11 o'clock, Monseigneur Mutel in person celebrated the Burial Mass. The representatives of the various Powers, American, German, English, Russian, and Japanese, without counting France, as well as several other foreign residents, all made it a pious duty to testify by their presence on this mournful occasion, their sympathy for the Catholic mission and their profound respect for the deceased. The concourse of Christians, grouped about the approaches to the provisional chapel, too small to contain so great a crowd;

their restrained grief, their thoughtfulness; the recitation of the litanies for the dead, the invocations of which were repeated by the entire gathering, breaking the silence of the sacred function and falling like so many tears upon the coffin of a Father, all seemed to concur, in placing upon this funeral ceremony the seal of an indescribable piety and emotion. Several of the ministers and consuls, altho not themselves Catholic, appeared moved by the spectacle.

After the Mass and the Absolution, the funeral cortége, headed by the Cross, traversed the city in the sight of an astonished and respectful crowd. Nearly five hundred Christians, all men, followed the bier, praying aloud in chorus. It took about two hours to reach the mission cemetery, which occupies the hill of Sam-ho-tiyang, at a distance of several minutes' walk from the Seminary of Ryong-san. This is the spot where, in company with several of his colleagues, all of whom he had accompanied to the field of rest, now reposes in his turn our dear Father Coste, in the expectation of a blessed resurrection.

May these few pages which we lay upon his still fresh tomb, in the name of all the missionaries of Korea, in testimony of our common veneration, long perpetuate in the midst of us the memory of his virtues. May they also, should they happen to come to the eyes of his worthy mother, if not altogether dry her tears, at least soften the bitterness of her regret. May they change, thro time, into benedictions the cries of nature! Is she not in truth happy, in the eyes of faith, this venerable woman to whom God has given such a son, and who in her turn, has given him to God? At the story of the life of this son, whom she may no more see here below, has she not the right to rejoice like the aged Isaac when he felt the perfume of Jacob's garments, and to say with the patriarch "Truly the perfume of the life of my child is as the odour of a field full of flowers and fruit, which the Lord hath crowned with blessings."

Such was indeed the life of which we have just given a slight sketch. It was a fertile field, endowed with the gifts of nature and of grace, a field cultivated with constant care and jealousy, a field full of works and of merit, gathered day by day without noise, without intermission; a field which will remain the honour and the treasure of his family, the honour also of the Society and of the Mission to which Father Coste belongs henceforth in a peculiar manner, after having given to them, as he knew so well how to do, all his energies and all his heart.

"*Ecce odor filii mei sicut odor agri pleni, cui benedixit Dominus!*"

TAI PORAM NAL.

A KOREAN PUBLIC HOLIDAY.

THE 15th day of the Chinese first month is always observed by Koreans as a "great public holiday," which they call *Tai Poram Nal* or Great Fifteenth day. The first day of the Chinese new year fell, this year, on February 13th, and in spite of the fact that the Western Calendar was recently (or was supposed to have been) introduced through Japanese influence to the people of the "Hermit Kingdom" and is now used by the government officials—we observed that the common people, and most likely all the aforesaid government officials, with one consent recognized and kept February 13th as their New Year's Day. It was evident, too, that in spite of the long-existing deplorable condition of political affairs in this country, the newly instituted reforms had but little effect on the people themselves, for they closed their shops, dressed themselves in coloured garments, tied up their "dearly beloved top-knots"—that is to say, the majority of those who managed to evade the eyes of the city police and escape the havoc caused a few weeks before by their tyrannical scissors. Top-knots were in vogue again and the natives paraded the streets in their New-Year's attire much in the same way as, I suppose, they have always done *post hon:inum memoriam*. In fact this was the orthodox, not to say typical, Korean New-Years Day.

Nearly all merchants, and of course all of the "labouring poor" who are unable to indulge in New-Year's merry-making for any length of time—either for want of time or money—open their shops and resume work a day or two after New-Year's Day, whilst others—the upper classes—who perhaps can well afford both leisure and means, prolong the festivities through half of the first month. From the 1st to the 15th of the first moon, Korean women may gratify their sporting propensities by frequently indulging in the game of "see-swing" meanwhile the boys are busy with their kites all day long. Men, on the other hand, enjoy the luxury of a ferocious (not to say dangerous and barbarous) stone-fight. Consequently on this "Great Fifteenth"

day, which seems to mark the close of all the New Year's festivities, everybody wants a holiday, teacher and servant alike, and they expect to get it; they don't mind even if you threaten to deduct a silver dollar from their wages at the end of the month! And to deduct *a whole* dollar from the wages of a Korean seems almost equal to robbing an Englishman of two shillings.

One morning I was suddenly seized by a fit of inquisitiveness, which, I think, led me to ask my teacher to supply me with a little information concerning the customary observances of this public holiday. He readily answered all my queries (except one which you will find unanswered at the end of the chapter!) and the result of my inquiries interested me and more than satisfied my western curiosity. My teacher, like most all Koreans, is desperately "patriotic." The word does not seem to mean in the Korean vocabulary all that it is meant to imply in an English dictionary. A real patriotic Korean is a very scarce article indeed!; he is rather proud of *him-self* and glories in *Chōsen pop* (custom) and *Chōsen pap* (food); nevertheless, I boast of obtaining the following information from a fairly trustworthy source and I hope it will not fail to interest the reader.

"Korean women," said the teacher, in answer to my first question, "are not supposed to rise at an extremely early hour on this particular morning, but the male portion of the populace rise earlier than usual." I was anxious to know *why*, but could not get a very satisfactory reason, so we marked this with an interrogation mark and passed on.

"We have a very curious 'eating custom' on the *Tai Poram Nal*, i.e., we are supposed to eat five different kinds of rice and as many different kinds of eatables as we can get. Rice, meat, and all the various kinds of vegetables are chopped up and mixed together, which mixture is then made up in shape of dumplings (only in lieu of any pastry we use large green cabbage leaves) and eaten. It's delicious. It has a wonderful effect on one's palate.

"We also buy as many nuts as we can get—I mean walnuts, chestnuts and "monkey" nuts—which are not intended to be eaten, but merely cracked, the kernel extracted from the shells, the former placed in one's mouth and then thrown away. It may seem very queer and superstitious to you foreigners; we do it in order to prevent the possibility of our being plagued in the summer with those horrid sores and boils so common in this country.

"Listen, *Tai Poram Nal* is the day on which every individual member of the family, baby and all, may partake of a *little* wine.

This is not merely 'for the stomach's sake' but taken in order that each one of our household may become 'quick of hearing.'"

"*Tai Poram Nal*" seems to be a bad day for Korean dogs, the number of which, in Seoul, seems to be almost as great as that of human beings. On the morning of this day they are cruelly deprived of their frugal meal. So the teacher says. Personally I thought that the majority of the canine tribe (at least those in the capital), did not get a "square meal" oftener than once in a moon! But not caring to wound my good man's feelings I kept my stray thoughts to myself. "Dogs are not fed in the morning for this reason—keep them without food on the morning of *Tai Poram Nal* and this will prevent them from being so terribly pestered with flies and other abominations during the long summer months."

If only this "dog-fasting" experiment had its desired effect I surmise that almost every European resident in Seoul would feel extremely grateful, for it is not altogether comfortable, or pleasant to the eye, when one gets surrounded in the streets by dogs which are neither more nor less than living masses of concentrated flies and insects!

"In the evening, or, I should say, during the early part of the night, a few of the more experienced farm laborers climb some of the nearest hills and watch for the rising of the moon. This they do for the purpose of noting the peculiar appearance of the moon as it slowly rises above the horizon: that is to say, they note its colour. If the moon is pale they conclude at once that there will be much rain during the coming summer, and that the rice crops will be good. On the other hand, if the moon is "fiery red" it means a prolonged drought, little or no rain and little or no rice! Then it is a case of *Hei go choukesso!*—we shall all die. The teacher, after having supplied me with the above information, stretched himself and intently gazed at me through his tortoise-shell spectacles, and looked *very wise indeed!* He then once more was ready to impart still more useful knowledge if necessary. He seemed to have wound himself up like a clock.

He started—"We have still another curious custom. It is one more way in which we try to find out, beforehand, about each month's probable fall of rain. A small piece of bamboo is split open and twelve beans are laid side by side in the grove of one of the halves. Then the bamboo is closed again, bound tightly round with cord and lowered into a friendly well. It is kept in the water all night. Some one draws it up out of the well next morning and examines the beans. Some of the beans may be more swollen than others—some bigger than others.

Each bean represents a month. If the first bean is greatly swollen and well soaked, it means plenty of rain during the first moon. Bean No. 2 is perhaps only swollen a little, that will mean but little rain in the second moon. Bean No. 3 is perhaps not affected by the water at all, but retains its natural size—that means a perfectly dry third month and so on!"

There followed another pause. The teacher lit his pipe—a Korean must have his pipe if he is to engage himself in conversation for any length of time—and after the good man had satisfied himself that his pipe was "well under weigh" he broke the spell of silence by asking me a question.

"Do you know all about our" *Tap Kyo Hanan Pop?*" *

I confessed my absolute ignorance on the subject; so he proceeded to explain.

"During the evening and early part of the night, say up to midnight, men, women and children walk the bridges, i.e. they pass and repass over some kind of bridge—any kind—several times. The number of times one has to do this entirely depends on each person's age! For instance I am forty-nine years of age, therefore I have to walk the bridge forty-nine times; a boy or a girl ten years of age, ten times." I asked my friend if he did not think it a rather laborious task for a venerable centenarian to perform. He evaded the difficulty by saying that "very old and feeble people were excused!" "Some of the *Yan-hau* take wine and refreshment to the bridges and there eat and drink merrily with their friends and acquaintances."

Lucky it is for every Korean that Seoul does not possess bridges of any thing like the length of London Bridge or that of Blackfriars, or the Brooklyn. For surely, if a Korean—man or woman—had to cross over bridges like those just named, forty-nine times, immediately after an evening meal, I feel sure that that Korean would "give up the ghost!"

"What do the country people do?" I asked.

"They amuse themselves in various ways. They have games and sports of all kinds, the principal game being that of 'Tug-of-war.' Men, women and children from different villages lay hold of the rope—and village pulls against village."

"Well, what else?"

But at this juncture our tiffin bell rang—it was nearing one o'clock—the teacher rose, knocked the ashes from his pipe, and after having said "Let us meet again," bowed solemnly and went home.

CAESAR.

* **답교호는법** The custom of walking the bridges.

SOME KOREAN CUSTOMS.

THE MOOTANG.

SEOUL is a very quiet city and at night it is as dark as it is quiet; only here and there a little flickering lantern lets the belated passer-by know that a wine-shop rests beneath its dismal rays, or the splashing of the way farer's boots in the mud of the unpaved streets may arouse an occasional dog—the sole guardian of the city's quiet. Yet every now and then one may hear a most vigorous double-action rap-tap-tapping where a couple of women are ironing or rather mangling the family linen. And when a lull occurs in this rhythmic tapping one knows that the poor things have stopped for a bit of gossip, only to fall to and keep up their musical tinkle during the most of the night. About the only other noise one may hear along the streets, aside from the brawling of some drunken wretch, is the jolly racket made by the Mootang. As they dance, beat their tom-toms and drums and utter their peculiar calls, a stranger can hardly believe other than that that particular house is giving a family "hop" and that some one is "calling off" in good old style, so naturally, too, as to make one feel like joining in the "swing your partners," &c., that the calls seem to mean. This only illustrates the contrariness of things oriental to the occidental mind however, for there is no merry-making in this house. There is music, dancing and calling out; but instead of being in mirth it is in sadness, for it is done by a paid female exorcist who is trying by her incantations to drive out the small-pox or other evil spirit from the person of some suffering member of the family. The family, if poor, may have pawned their clothing to pay for this treatment, and while they may get some pleasure from the music and dancing they are much more concerned in the results they hope to obtain.

These Mootang represent a very ancient institution and belief in the efficacy of their methods is very general among the lower classes but their patrons are not all of the common people.

The Mootang use as instruments a drum made in the shape of an hour-glass and over four feet in length, copper cymbals, a brass or copper rod with little tinklers suspended from it by

chains made of the same material, a bronze or copper gong and a pair of baskets, telescope shaped, for scratching. This scratching is very necessary in case of cholera, for this disease being caused by rats climbing up inside the human anatomy, as is supposed, the scratching is expected to alarm and drive them away, since it so nearly resembles the noise made by cats.

Besides the above musical (or *noisical*) instruments, the Mootang use banners of paper or strips of bright colored silk, which they wave and weave about them in the manner of a modern serpentine dancer; they also use umbrellas and fans in parts of their performance. They also make use of images of men and animals, sometimes expensively made and gorgeously painted, at other times mere effigies of straw. The financial condition of the patient settles the question as to what instruments or figures are used.

Aside from driving away the spirit of disease from an afflicted person, these women are also called in to purify a well in which a person has been drowned, in which case she induces the spirit of the drowned person to leave. Also, after a death she is called in to persuade the soul of the departed to return and look after those left behind. She also deposits the bad luck of an individual in one of the before-mentioned images, together with some coin, which image being thrown into the street is taken and torn to pieces by some poor beggar or drunken person who thus, for the sake of the coin, takes upon himself the ill luck that has been annoying the other person.

These Mootang were not allowed inside the city walls by Tai Cho Tai Wang, who founded the present dynasty 505 years ago, hence their noisy little temples are still seen outside but near to the walls. The priestesses, however, come into the city freely. This order is recruited from among hysterical and silly girls as well as from women who go into it for a livelihood or for baser reasons. Sometimes the daughter of a genteel family may become a Mootang, though this is rare, as her people would rather kill her than have her madness take this form. Men marry these women and have families by them but the men who so marry are low fellows who are willing to be supported by the wages of women however basely employed. The order is said to date back 4000 years, when, in China, they were called Moo Ham and were under a set of official regulations.

It is related that in very ancient times the magistrate of Opp had much trouble with the Mootang of his district because they carried on the practice of human sacrifice, for which purpose the people assembled once a year and brought beautiful girls who were thrown into a river to appease the spirit with

whom the Mootang were in communication. This magistrate Soh, decided to stop this evil custom. Accordingly when all were assembled for the annual sacrifice and the chief Mootang had called on the river spirit to accept the offering about to be made, the magistrate stepped forward and ordered the Mootang to go into the water herself as the girl was not beautiful enough for the use of the spirit. She objected, asking a few days' delay that she might obtain a more acceptable victim. The magistrate would brook no delay, however, and forced her into the water, where she sank and did not come to the surface. He then forced her servants in to see what had become of their mistress and they also were drowned, whereupon the others begged him to desist and offered to give up the objectionable custom. This he agreed to and the practice was given up. It is said that a wag having painted the name of this magistrate on the bottom of a sleeping Mootang's foot, she fell dead on trying to stand on that foot after awakening. It is also said that a Mootang foretold to Tai Cho Tai Wang that he would be a King, long before he had any kingly ambition, and it is also related that once, when this great Tai Cho was hunting, prior to his founding the dynasty of Chosen, he heard a peculiar grinding noise, and on investigation found that it came from a fox who was busy grinding a human skull to fit her own head, which, when she had put it on, made her look like a beautiful girl. Tai Cho tried to shoot the fox, but did not succeed. Some time after this he heard of a wonderful Mootang at the old capital Song Do, who could and did raise the dead to life. In this way and in the healing of disease she had gathered almost all the money of the residents of the capital. On going to see her, he saw that it was the fox he had tried to kill and again he tried to take her life, whereupon she upbraided him and told him she was working in his own interest, that she was collecting money for him to build a new capital when he should become king. He asked her where the money was deposited and she told him he would find it in the bed of the Han river on the banks of which he was to build his capital. He went to the place, it is said, and found the money which he afterwards used in building the city and walls of Seoul.

H. N. ALLEN.

KOREAN FINANCE.

THE subject I attempt to discuss in this paper interests me deeply, and I endeavored to get some reliable records appertaining to Korean finance, but there are none that can be trusted as a statement of facts. Statistics of any kind or tabulated records made from accurate investigations are unknown in this land, not only with finance, but with every thing else. Therefore, I cannot lay before the readers the facts in exact figures, as is done in discussing such matters in a well regulated government. However I will discuss the subject, in a fashion, within the scope of my knowledge.

Upon diligent inquiry, I have obtained sufficient data to state that the Korean people give their Government an adequate revenue to carry on the Government Departments in a handsome manner; that is, if the Government should get all of the monies the people pay out of their pockets towards the public funds, and then spend the money in a more systematic way. The budget for 1896 estimates the income at \$4,899,410 and the expenditure at \$6,316,831, leaving a deficiency of \$1,417,421. This deficiency is to be made good by a foreign loan.

These figures look very accurate as far as they go, but upon close examination they are far from accurate. The estimate for the income was made by guess work, because there is no record in the Finance Department which gives anyone an idea of what is the actual amount of the government revenue.

The grain and land taxes are the most important sources of revenue, and the budget estimates the former at \$2,428,033, the latter at \$1,477,681. These estimates were made in an apparently exact fashion, but on what ground they calculate that these will be even approximately so is more than I can conjecture. The population of the kingdom increases annually, and the cultivated land likewise enlarges over the previous year, yet the amount of the revenue that comes to the Finance Department becomes less rather than more. The explanation of this mystery is that the Finance Department does not know, and does not try to know the population, or the area of the cultivated lands in the country. One would naturally think that under such a lax system the people would get the benefit of this ignorance on the part of the authorities. District Tax Collectors and the *chusas*

under them seem to know all about everybody's business in their own districts, and make the people pay every cash that is due to the Government and frequently more. I have this information not from hearsay, but from my own personal knowledge. The total amount the people pay to the Government is twice more than what the Government actually receives. More than one half goes astray after it leaves the hands of the people. Where does it go? It is evident that it goes to fill the pockets of these officials, whose business it is to squeeze the people and rob the Government. These Officials, either in Seoul or in the country districts, belong to the so called 'Do Nothing Class,' or *yangban*. They neither toil nor spin, but they live in comfort and affluence compared with their hard working countrymen. The officials keep the Government treasury in a state of constant bankruptcy, and rob the industrious classes of the rice which they earn by the sweat of their brows.

The system of collecting revenue has been allowed to go to decay, while the methods of squeezing and defrauding have been improved year by year. Occasionally some influential as well as ingenious statesman gets out a new set of squeezers by which he compresses the people's pockets with more formidable energy. A few years of free application of such squeezers render almost every body in the kingdom poverty-stricken. Since the introduction of the new reforms, I am told that these squeezers no longer work the wonders they used to, but no doubt some are still doing it quietly, when they have a long wire to pull.

In looking over the several items of expenditure, out of \$6,316,831 only \$149,090 are intended to be spent for the benefit of the people in general. That is to say \$124,268 for educational purposes, \$15,000 for public works and \$9,822 for the support of prisoners. The balance of the \$6,167,741 is intended for the salaries and other expenses of the Government Officials.

This seems to me to be pretty hard on the taxpayers. When the people work hard for nine months in a year to pay the money into the national treasury in hopes that the Government will protect them and make good laws for them, it would seem that they might justly expect the money would be spent along these lines, but for years gone by it was regularly spent and was intended to be spent for the benefit of the *Yangban* alone. It is a poor policy as well as a bad investment for Korea to waste the money of the treasury on these useless officials and chusas whose ranks were created mainly for the purpose of giving *Yangbans* positions. This Government can be run without any trouble with a third of the present force provided each one

does his full duty faithfully. A reduction of two-thirds of the officials means a saving of one half the expenditure. If the government take the money thus saved to establish industrial schools, a few factories, open the mines and build railroads between the important points, these dismissed officials will earn their living in these institutions, and at the same time they will learn a useful art or trade. Before long they will be glad of their dismissal and they will feel independent, for they will be earning their living by their own labor and knowledge. It seems the best investment the Government can make is to put in two or three million dollars annually to teach the *Yangbands* how to live without lobbying and "office-hunting" — to use a well-known Korean expression.

The system of collecting taxes requires an immediate revision. The task of this sort is a very difficult one and it would not be satisfactorily adjusted unless some able foreign advisers lent their hands in shaping the method. Establishment of national banks will help the finances of the nation materially, and it will give opportunity to the laboring classes to save their daily earnings. The mint has been coining the new copper, nickel and silver pieces, but the metal was bought in Japan at a high price. It was taken to the Japanese mint and molded there in the shape of coin and brought over here. Then the Korean mint simply put the government stamp on them. This sort of coining costs the Government more than the coins thus produced. Korea produces gold alone worth over three million annually and it all goes out of the country in the shape of crude metal at very low market prices. If the Government made a device by which the gold could be bought and made either into coins or standard bars to be kept in the Finance Department as basis of national currency, then the Government would be in the position to issue paper money, and the national banks could circulate their notes. If the Government accumulates gold annually at the rate of two million dollars, in ten years there will be twenty million dollars of gold reserve in the Finance Department. I confidently predict that the day is coming when Korea will have enough income to put aside this much gold without any inconvenience. First of all reduce the expenditure by reducing the Government Officials; and secondly, revise the system of tax collection. Then there will be a surplus for the Government to use to improve the public works, educate the people in the arts and trades and buy up the crude yellow metal for the basis of a national finance.

PHILIP JAISOHN.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.**RAILROAD BETWEEN SEOUL AND CHEMULPO.**

A railroad concession has been granted to an American syndicate headed by Mr. James R. Morse, to build a railroad from Seoul to Chemulpo. Work is expected to begin at once. Mr. Leigh Hunt, representing a powerful syndicate of American capitalists, made a hasty visit to Seoul April 12-14, in connection with the new enterprise. We learn from *The Independent* that the "Government cedes to the company the land forming the route between the two points; the company builds and equips the road and has complete control for fifteen years. At the end of that time the Government may buy the road, if it desires, the price to be determined by one representative from both parties or, if they fail to agree, by an umpire to be chosen by them. If at that time the Government does not wish to buy, the road shall remain in the company's hands for a further period of ten years when the Government shall again have the option of buying. At the end of every ten years the Government shall have the privilege of buying in the road."

The railroad will give employment to a great many Koreans whom the changes already introduced into the Government have thrown out of work. It will give an impetus to trade and not the least in importance it will show Korean students the necessity for more than a mere smattering knowledge of western science. The Royal College and the Pai Chai College have a large number of students whose ambition, as far as we can see, seems to end with being an interpreter in a foreign legation or a chusa in the Korean Government. A railroad between Seoul and Chemulpo is but the beginning of railroads in this country. More must of necessity follow. The open ports must be connected with the capital. There is good anthracite coal, not to speak of other minerals, at Pyeng Yang only 160 miles from Seoul. Water carriage in this instance can not be availed of owing to the difficulty of handling at the termini and it is better to develop the resources of the country, when they are available, than to purchase abroad. It is therefore almost certain that a railroad must be built in a very few years between Seoul and Pyeng Yang. We shall confess ourselves, much disappointed if the students now in the schools mentioned above, and in others for that matter, do not see the neces-

sity for a more extensive as well as intensive knowledge of western science. Up to the present time there has been little or no incentive to study anything outside the Chinese classics, but with the building of railroads, the opening of new industries and the development of the mines of the country, young Koreans cannot fail to see that something more modern than the teaching of "The Youth's Primer" and the "Great Learning" are needed. We welcome any legitimate enterprise that will get us out of the ruts of 500 years.

We avail ourselves also of this opportunity to express our joy at this concession, from a patriotic standpoint. Not that we love others less, no, no, but our own country more. And from a purely selfish point of view, gladly will we welcome the exit from the road between the capital and the port of "the two man chair," "the eight man chair" and lastly—the pack-pony.

The Conclusion of Remarkable Trials.—The trials of the Koreans charged with complicity in the events of October 8, (and matters connected therewith), when Her Majesty the Queen was murdered, have ended after a prolonged and patient investigation.

At first thirteen were arrested but two were at an early stage of the trials discharged as innocent. On the 18th inst. judgments in the other cases were rendered. One of the accused, Yi Hui Hwa, was condemned to death and has been executed by hanging. Of the others, four were banished for life, two for fifteen years, and two for ten years. One was adjudged to be imprisoned with labor for one year and one, Cheung In Hung, formerly Vice-Minister of Justice, was acquitted and discharged. It is usual to send persons condemned to banishment to some place in Korea, often an island, distant from the capital, and no doubt this will be done in these cases.

When these persons were arrested, it was feared by many, in view of former precedents as well as of the terrible and treasonable crimes with which they were charged and the excitement existing in Korea over the recent change in governmental affairs, that probably harsh and questionable methods would be pursued in the investigation and justice not administered. At first all sorts of rumors were afloat, and it was even stated in one or more of the newspapers in Jpaan that the prisoners were being accorded no opportunity to make any real defense, but on the other hand were being subjected to most cruel torture and to such harsh treatment that it was "said" that several had died under the hardships inflicted.

None of these apprehensions, however reasonable they may

have been, were realized and there seems to have been no foundation for any of these statements as to harsh or unfair treatment.

We are assured on good authority that the prisoners were well treated in jail, that the trials were fairly, impartially and patiently conducted, that no torture or coercion or intimidation was practiced, that the witness for the accused were called and examined and that every opportunity was given to each of the accused to make good his defense.

The Government and especially the Minister of Justice and other officers of the Law Department deserve praise for the way these cases have been conducted and we trust that the clemency and impartiality shown, so different from that of the trials in December last when the prisoners were horribly tortured to make them confess crimes of which they were not guilty, may serve as a precedent and example for the future.

The Seoul Independent.—This paper appeared in the Capital, Tuesday, April 7. It is a "Journal of Korean Commerce, Politics, Literature, History and Art." Dr. Philip Jaisohn, a Korean by birth, but now an American citizen, is the editor. The paper is intended primarily for Koreans. It is bilingual, Unmun and English. The first two pages are devoted to Korean matters, the third to advertisements and the fourth is in English, intended "as an incentive to English speaking Koreans to push their knowledge of English for its own sake" as well as for "those who have no other means of gaining accurate information in regard to the events now transpiring in Korea."

The editor announces his platform as follows:— "Korea for the Koreans, clean politics, the cementing of foreign friendships, the gradual tho steady development of Korean resources with Korean capital, as far as possible, under foreign tutelage, the speedy translation of foreign text-books into Korean that the youth may have access to the great things of history, science, art, and religion without having to acquire a foreign tongue, and LONG LIFE TO HIS MAJESTY, THE KING."

We believe *The Independent*, conducted on the lines herein indicated, will be of inestimable value to the Koreans and is already meeting with a hearty reception.

The editor, very wisely, we think, discards the Chinese character and uses only the Unmun. We learn that a Cabinet Minister complained that he could not read the paper, but we venture the opinion that for every Cabinet Minister or aristocrat unable to read it, there are several hundred plebeians who can, and to them we must look for substantial progress. We welcome *The Independent* and wish it great success.

Death of Dr. Hugh Brown.—Dr. Brown of the Presbyterian Church in Korea from the fall of 1889 until January 1894, closed his earthly life in the clear hope of the life to come on Sunday, Jan. 5th at Dansville, N. Y. Dr. Brown and his wife, Dr. Fanny Hurd Brown, were heartily welcomed to Korea as a strong medical reinforcement. After living in Seoul for nearly a year, they removed to Fusen where they opened medical work for the Koreans. Both looked forward to years of labor in that place, but the disease was already preying upon Dr. Brown and in less than three years from the time of his arrival here he and his family were compelled to return home. This was a serious loss to the mission. To his bereaved wife and two children we extend our sincere sympathies.

High Treasurer of Korea.—J. McLeavy Brown, L.L.D. Chief Commissioner of Customs, has consented to undertake the oversight of the Korean exchequer. We do not pretend to be acquainted with the details of the duties of the office, but we understand that Dr. Brown's endorsement is necessary before money can be taken from the Treasury. This is a good long step in the right direction and we feel quite sure the doors of the Treasury will swing open with less ease, not to say frequency, than they did in the days of the past when no pretense even at keeping accounts was made.

Min Yong Hwan.—This young nobleman left Seoul April 1st, as Special Envoy from Korea to represent his country at the coronation of the Czar in Moscow next month. Mr. Min is accompanied by ex-Acting Minister of Education T. H. Yun, who is Secretary of the Embassy, E. Stein Esq., Foreign Secretary, and three other attendants.

Indemnity.—It is reported in the Japanese papers that forty Japanese have been killed in Korea and that their Government is about to ask an indemnity of yen 5,000 for every life taken. This is, according to international usage, right and proper. But why should not the Korean Government ask for an indemnity for the murder of her subjects by Japanese? Is there nothing to be done for the assassination of the Queen, the Minister of the Royal Household, Yi, Col. Hong and others? Kill a coolie in an alley or in a country district—yen 5 000. Murder a Queen in her rooms—*Gomen nasai*.

From Pyeng Yang to Seoul in two Days.—The Rev. Graham Lee and Dr. J. Hunter Wells left Pyeng Yang on

Monday April 6, at 5 a. m. and rode until 6.45 p. m., making eighty-three miles. The next morning they were on their wheels again at half past four and reached the West Gate of Seoul at 7.43 p. m. travelling seventy-eight miles. The distance from the East Gate of Pyeng to the New West Gate of the Capital is, according to the cyclometers attached to their wheels and which varied but a third of a mile, 161 miles. This reduces the distance between the two cities some twenty-two miles. We hope these brethren will pardon us for noticing that they make their best records between Pyeng Yang and Seoul and not between Seoul and Pyeng Yang.

A New Book.—W. H. Wilkinson, H. B. M. Acting Consul at Chemulpo, has a book in press on "The Korean Government; Constitutional changes in Korea during the period from July 23, 1894—October 7, 1895, with an Appendix on subsequent enactments to the close of 1895."

The book will contain an introduction, a sketch of the old system of government, an analysis of the re-organised Government and the appendices. The frontispiece is a map of Korea showing the boundaries of the old provinces and the new counties, with the capital town of each.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[The following communication was crowded out of the last two numbers, but we gladly give it place now.—*Ed. K.R.*]

Fusan, Jan. 26, 1896.

To The Editor of

"THE KOREAN REPOSITORY."

DEAR SIR.—

I have on hand twenty copies of the Report of the Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, held at Detroit, Mich. March, 1894. It was the largest student convention on missions that has been held. Over 1000 student delegates were present, fifty-four Board Secretaries and representatives of Missionary Societies, sixty-three returned missionaries and thirty-seven Professors and other instructors in educational institutions.

The Report presents in no uncertain way the purpose and policy of the student Volunteer Movement. It is a volume of 373 pages 8vo., bound in cloth. I will forward by mail to any one in Korea on the receipt of \$2.00 silver.

Yours very truly,
James Edward Adams.

LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

The China Mission Hand-Book. First Issue.—Prepared by a Committee. 8vo. Pp. 436. Fourteen Maps. Published by the PRESBYTERIAN MISSION PRESS, Shanghai. \$2.25 per single copy; ten copies and upwards, \$2.00.

THERE are few persons, I take it, even among the missionaries themselves, who have any really adequate conception of the vast amount of Christian work now in progress in China, or of the varied means and methods employed in that work or of the deep and solid success by which it has been accompanied. Only in a few very superficial aspects does the work or its development and results attract public attention, and yet during the past forty years there has been silently growing up a strong, healthy, well-trained, spiritually-minded and partially self-supporting native Church, too vigorous to be content to remain altogether in foreign leading-strings and too full of the apostolic spirit not to address itself to home and, in some instances, even to foreign mission work. The number of Missionary Societies has largely increased, while the individual worker, foreign and native, has become a great army. It is still possible to classify agencies as evangelistic, medical, educational or literary, but the terms have a wider extent than formerly. The free-moving *franc-tireur* style of campaign of earlier days is gradually giving way to a methodic and carefully thought-out system which aims at making the most of every opportunity, endeavours to influence every city, town, village and hamlet, and seeks to avail itself of every change in national life or circumstance. There is a growing tendency to union—not formal but practical—and an amount of co-operation which would surprise many. Thus the medicals have banded themselves into an association for mutual help; the educationalists have done the same. The different Presbyterian bodies are forming common presbyteries and synods and are looking forward to the time when one General Assembly shall meet for the whole country. In particular departments of work the same thing holds true. All the romanized versions of the Scriptures, now in such extensive use in Mid and South China, have to pass under the scrutiny of a Committee, whose object it is to harmonize their systems, to eliminate every objectionable feature in their romanization and to bring them all under the control of the same general principles. And other illustrations might easily be given. But with reference to all these facts, however, the difficulty has been that they were not easily discovered even by those deeply interested.

The China Mission Hand-Book, just issued from the Shanghai press, is a volume of about 450 pages, and bears in every feature, in type, paper, binding, &c., the well-known characteristics of its parentage. Its purpose is to gather up in convenient and easily handled form all the principal facts about the native religions, &c., and about the Christian missions at work in the Middle Kingdom. There is no other manual in which all this information is obtainable. The book is divided into two parts, one of which extends to more than ninety pages and the other to over 300. In

addition to a general map of the whole country and a linguistic map, there are twelve sectional maps designed to show the position of the principal mission stations.

The first section is taken up with accounts of the religions of China, indigenous and imported, the languages spoken, and other matter likely to be of service to the young missionary. In every case the papers are highly condensed—in some instances too much so—but their writers are invariably acknowledged authorities. Dr. Faber treats of "Confucianism," Rev. T. Richard, of "Chinese Buddhism: Its Rise and Progress;" Dr. Joseph Edkins, of "Chinese Buddhism: Its Excellencies and Defects," and Dr. Martin, lately of the Tung Wan College, Peking, of "Buddhism a Preparation for Christianity." There are four essays on Taoism by the same hands. The Rev. H. V. Noyes of the American Presbyterian Mission, Canton, deals with "Mohammedanism in China," a subject to which he has given many years' study. Dr. Geo. Washburn's "Mohammedanism: Points of Contrast and Contact with Christianity" has been extracted from the records of the Parliament of Religions, 1893. Five pages are devoted to a brief account of "The Secret Sects of China," which are described as "religious bodies which are not sanctioned by the Government, and as they are not sanctioned are compelled to meet in secret, hence the name Secret Sects." They appear to be very numerous, their adherents being estimated at between 20,000 and 30,000 in each province. The Government has met them with strenuous opposition, on the plea that they were "bad characters." At first many persons accepted the Government's description as accurate, but "on further inquiry into the matter we find that the Chinese Government unhappily is as capable of misrepresenting these as it does Christianity. While not denying that the followers of these have sometimes broken into rebellion, just as the followers of the other four religions have done; still those who know them best have a very high opinion of some of them. They regard them as the most vital and noble of the Chinese, the moral backbone of the nation. When they become Christians they are generally of far greater value than Christians from the so-called non-religious or orthodox classes, as if made of higher stuff altogether."

This suggests an interesting line of study for some student of Korean life and religion. It seems hardly probable that similar societies do not exist in this country or that within their circles there may not be some deeply religious souls capable of good work if won over to Christ.

"On the Foreign Languages Spoken in China and the Classification of the Chinese Dialects" is the title of a valuable paper by Mr. P. G. von Mollendorf. Its remarks on romanized versions of the Scriptures deserve careful attention; but surely the statement that "The language of Hainan is pure Cantonese" requires very considerable modification.

In "Spread of Great Religions throughout the World" Mr. Richard asks and answers the questions "What are their Axioms in regard to Life and Religion? What their Aims? What their Practice? What their Result? and What New Departures?" In a later essay on "Christian Missions in Asia," he concludes as follows:—

"The world all over is groaning under sufferings. The Christian religion alone attempts the salvation of the whole world. Asia, especially China, has millions dying of sheer starvation every year. Christians alone attempt to save these at present. Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism have no practical scheme of deliverance. India has the baneful caste [system?] binding innumerable burdens on the Hindus, and it has millions of ignorant poor. Hinduism seems to a large degree helpless. Mahommedanism seems content with the condition of the people under its rule. Chris-

tianity, on the other hand, is concerned for all nations and peoples in Asia. It has missionaries everywhere, who not only point to a higher life in every department, but also to the practical means of attaining that life. It finds Asia poor and naked and oppressed, ignorant and miserable and imperfectly acquainted with God. It wants to make it well-to-do, well-sheltered, well-informed, a happy, conscious child of God and a glad heir of immortality. Bringing such glad tidings of great joy to Asia, no Asiatic can be anything but grateful to it. "There only wants time to make these ideas clear to them at large, then will whole nations turn from dead idols to the living God." Mr. Richard, more than any man I know in the East, has the knack not only of engrossing his readers' attention, but also of writing his own personality into every sentence he pens.

"The Need of China," "China's Appalling Need of Reform" and "Riots," are the subjects of the last three articles in this Section.

The second and larger part of this *Hand-Book* is devoted to the Protestant Missions within the Chinese borders. These are grouped according to nationality, the British Missions coming first, then the American, German, Canadian and Swedish. These are followed by the Publication and Educational Societies. No mention is made of Roman Catholic Missions, surely a serious omission in a book of this sort. The plan adopted is to give an historical sketch of each mission, written in most cases by a member of its own staff, and to follow this up with its own statistical tables. The result is a perfect mine of valuable information, containing as it does the record of innumerable experiments, successes and failures, and the condensed experience of nearly a century. Korean Missionaries and many others who may never have seen China will find here many hints and suggestions of permanent worth, as well as warnings of possible dangers. Thus, opening almost at random, we come across such notices as these.

Church Missionary Society, Fuhkien Province (p. 30.)—"In some districts evangelistic bands have been formed of native evangelists who go round certain districts and exhibit the Life of Christ and other scripture subjects by means of magic-lantern slides. This has been found an admirable plan for bringing crowds together and teaching them evangelistic truth. This method has been much used and blessed."

There is in connection with the Mission a theological college for training Mission Agents. Here are thirty-nine students at present being taught in this institution. We pay as follows:—Students in the college receive, while training, \$3.00 a month each. After having spent four or five years in this institution they are appointed to a station, and receive if single, \$4.00 per month, if married, \$5.00 and if satisfactory in every way to the superintending missionary, they receive at the end of every succeeding three years an increase of \$1.00 a month till the salary reaches the maximum of \$8.00 a month if married, and \$6.00 a month if single. When ordained they receive \$10.00 a month.

English Presbyterian Mission, Formosa (p. 66.)—"There are generally three dispensers in the hospital who learn what they can in the course of practice. Not much has been done in the way of direct instruction. After some years' training, say five or six years, they go out on their own account, opening a medicine shop and giving medical advice. In most cases they have made large fortunes. Doubtless by their means much suffering is relieved; but on the whole their influence has not been found very helpful to the native Church. * * * * A still more undesirable development has been the extensive sale of western medicine and practice of vaccination by the Christians. It might be difficult to point to any positive harm done by

any of them; but there is something unhealthy about the close connection that exists in some parts of the field between Church membership and medicine selling."

American South Methodist Mission (p. 232.)—"Three Girls' Boarding Schools are carried on by the mission. Their total attendance of pupils for the present year is sixty-six. One of these, that at McLyeire House in Shanghai, is different from an ordinary boarding-school, in that the pupils are required to pay their way, board, tuition, &c. This school was opened for the special purpose of getting pupils from the higher class families, who have hitherto refused to send their daughters to an ordinary mission school."

It would be easy to quote such hints by the score, but suffice it to say that as all the historical sketches are drawn up on the same model, due provision being made for the description of peculiar features, they all deal with the same subjects and thus bring the experience of all the mission upon all points clearly and definitely before the reader's mind.

ALEXANDER KENMURE.

구세교문답 Saving Faith Catechism. Chinese by Mrs. H. S. C.

Nevius: translated by Rev H. G. Underwood, D. D. 16°, 28 leaves; Published by the translator. Manilla paper, sewed. 8 poun each; 6 nyang, 25 poun per 100.

The above is not the title of a new work. It denotes a further adaptation of the catechism that has long been known as the "banner tract" for China, and has already gone through three previous adaptations for Korea. To most observers this fact of multiple adaptations of single tracts is one of curious interest, for each differs from the other in little save in the use of a peculiar term for the Deity, and all taken together may be looked upon as chronicling the progress of the term question in Korea. The term 順序, which characterizes the issue under notice, is sure to prove a barrier to its use by the great body of missionaries who otherwise would distribute it. Its leading innovation however may well attract friends to it, for certainly the ease of perusal is many times multiplied by the simple expedient adopted, of spacing between the words. Our friends in Europe and America will be apt to laugh at the suggestion of novelty in this practice, but to us, who have never before seen a Korean work in which the words and sentences were not thrown pell mell together, this is indeed a "sicht for sair een." We hope it may inaugurate a new want in such matters. Some of our Korean friends have been a little puzzled at the outset, but the running over of a column or two has rapidly brought them to our way of thinking.

From one standpoint in particular the writer of this page expects from now on to criticize, as impartially as he may, whatsoever works come to his hand, and herein he finds the present brochure lamentably deficient, for no work more slovenly in mechanical execution has probably ever been put forth in Seoul. It may be as well therefore that the publisher advises its free distribution, since few who look at a literary production from the position a Korean always takes would be likely to invest readily in this.

It is a fact painfully evident of late to those most interested, that from a similar standpoint the current issue of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels is not all it should be. Few purchasers are found for them, and none whatever to commend them. Indeed it has become a matter of no doubt at all that another, neater, better spaced, and consequently higher priced edition must be undertaken before these Scriptures can obtain as wide a currency as has been hoped.

To our mind it is a point highly creditable to the Korean public that this should prove to be so demonstrable. It is a slur and not a fact whereby the native reader is accused of such indolence as to make common use of the floor for his reading-desk. He has a fondness for neat typography, and for large characters because they are more commonly neat. Wide margins his economy of material debars him from admiring. But of good paper he has a veritable love. These are not the opinions only of the literateur. The rustic takes his cue in such matters from the village school teacher, and both together turn to the past for precedent. It is a wise man therefore who consults their taste when he brings literary wares to their market, and a limited experience gives us confidence in the assertion that he will not fail to find their wallets duly, perhaps unexpectedly, responsive.

The Korean Religious Tract Society's calendar for this year is an innovation inasmuch as it follows the newly adopted chronology familiar to foreign nations in place of the clumsy and antiquated Chinese system. It is worthy of note that it has met with abundant sale in Seoul and vicinity, but has won less favor thus far in remoter districts. It is hoped those who go out for the usual spring trips will carry a supply and so help to popularize it.

No tract probably was ever more sought for while out of print than **구세진전**, and this neither for the sake of its author nor its translator apparently, but by reason of its contents. Now that the new edition is before the public it enjoys a steady sale that quite warrants the expectation of those who issued it. It is reckoned by some missionaries the best book to place in the hands of enquirers who have finished the study of the Ross catechism,

부활주일례비 is the title of a booklet which greeted many of us Easter morning by way of a special church service. The design is one worthy of repetition upon other occasions. Its effect is decidedly neat, but a closer attention to detail and more careful washing of the type before putting to press would have made it more pleasing.

경세론 Discourse on Reverence. By Rev W. L. Swallen. 16°, 8 leaves.

Published by the author. White paper, sewed and cut.

As in the case of most first ventures in didactic literature the edition of the above work is a small one. Such essays are apt to represent the writer's idea of how the truths of Christianity should be presented, and he prints only so many copies as his pocket-book allows in order to try them with both enquirers and workers. To the foreigner the logic of Mr. Swallen's production seems surely effective. But do Koreans want logic? That is a question brought to every one of us almost daily. Is it worth while to multiply argumentative treatises in the hope that they will follow the argument and digest it? We opine not. Rather let us be content with what has been already done in this kind, and let us try to prepare books more readily assimilable by minds of the oriental type. Nevertheless this is a creditable specimen of its class and would be a pleasure for foreign minds to read, had the printer taken pains to make it other than a distress to the eyes.

C. C. VINTON.

OFFICIAL GAZETTE.

Mar. 6, the Magistrate of Kwang Ju—Nam Han—killed by the insurgents.

Mar. 13, Yi Ha Yong appointed Envoy Extraordiany and Minister Plenipotentiary to Japan.

Mar. 21, Special messenger sent to the northern provinces to announce the Royal will and request the insurgents to disperse.

Mar. 25, 22nd birthday af His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince.

April. 10, Six rebel leaders sentenced to banishment for life.

April. 12, Twelve Committees appointed to revise the rsgulations of the local excutive authorities.

April. 14, Yun Chi Ho appointed Privy Councillor.

QUARTERLY CLIMATICAL REPORT.

JANUARY—MARCH, 1896.

Chemulpo, 1st April,

	Mean Baro- meter.	Mean Temp. in air, Fahr.	Mean Hygro- meter.	Dew- point Temp. Fahr.	Hum- idity, Temp. Fahr.	Highest Max. Temp. Fahr.	Lowest Min. Temp. Fahr.
January	30.25	28.4	27.1	21.77	.738	40.5	6.8
February	30.33	31.0	29.1	23.97	.718	51.5	11.3
March	30.28	37.0	34.7	31.48	.891	64.5	18.5

The foregoing table shows that the mean pressure for each month was somewhat below the normal for the same months at Chemulpo, but higher than the normal pressure for this latitude. The temperature wave for January and February was fairly steady, but during March it began to show some slight excess, especially at the maximum and minimum observations. As for the monthly curve, on inspection of the means of either air, hygrometer or dewpoint temperature, it will at once be seen that the increase of temperature was not excessive, but from my own experience and observations since 1886, more in consistence with health than might be expected or in previous years observed.

The past winter has been an excessively dry one and continues to remain so. No dryness like this has been observed since 1883. There was almost no snow and rain. Fog, which made its appearance rather early, in Feb. and Mar, was also of a dry nature. Dew was noticed this quarter. Hoar-frost was observed frequently at times covering everything like a coat of snow.

	Snow in liquid.	Rain	Fog
Jan.	0.60"	0.57"	0.0
Feb.	0.07"	0.40"	39hours
Mar.	0.00"	0.14"	47"

The weather during Jan. was very changeable, some days fine, others unpleasant; on the whole strong winds, especially during the night. During the day the wind was quiet, but towards sun-set it increased, blowing at times strong and squally, moderating again towards sun-rise. The wind was E. N. E. with an average force of 22m. an hour

Throughout Feb. the weather was fine, winds moderate but very variable, N. N. E. prevailing, average force 18.6 m. per hour. In Mar. the weather was rather fine with an occasional dull appearance. The wind was extremely changeable, with a moderate gale for three days, varying from N. N. W. to West, but unlike Jan. it was calm towards sun-set and increasing after sun-rise. There was a prevailing S. S. W. wind with an average force of 22 m. an hour.

The force of the wind here given is very nearly correct, tho probably a greater velocity would have to be recorded were the observations taken on a prominent position by an anemometer.

F. H. MÖRSEL.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE "top-knot war" is about over with the top-knot on top.

The Wi Pyeng or Righteous Army has done much, in the last two or three months, that was anything but righteous—robbery, arson, murder. Some one has called them "brigand-patriots," *The Independent* thinks "these fellows are a sort of 'Coxey' army." For the past few years they were known as The Tong Haks. These several names stand for the same thing.

The Hon. C. Waeber several months ago was made full Minister to Mexico. On the 28th. of Feb. he assumed the full office of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Mexico, but for the time being is in charge of the Legation at Seoul. He thus becomes the Doyen of the diplomatic body.

J. Komura, Minister from Japan to Korea, was on the 8th inst. promoted to the full rank of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.

Dr. H. N. Allen has been appointed Vice and Deputy Consul General by the United States Government. This in addition to his other offices of Secretary of Legation and Chargé d' Affairs ad interim.

F. Reinsdorf, Esq., of the German Consulate in Seoul, has been transferred to take charge of the Consulate at Amoy, China.

Mr. Carl Lührs of Chemulpo, for ten years with Messrs Meyer and Co., has been admitted to the firm.

Col. F. J. H. Nienstead, on April 1st, was transferred from the War Department as Adviser to the Pay and Ordnance Department.

We are in receipt of an interesting letter from Gen. Dye, on the demeanor of the soldiers at the Palace last October, which is unavoidably crowded out this number. It will appear in the next.

The interesting and valuable article on Father Coste, which we publish this month, was in answer to our request, furnished us thro the courtesy of Monseigneur Mutel. It was written, we understand, by the priest who has temporarily succeeded Father Coste as private chaplain to the Bishop. Our obligation and thanks are due to Mrs. Kenmure for the excellent translation.

REV. W. M. JUNKIN and A. D. DREW, M. D., of the Southern Presbyterian Mission, with their families, left Seoul March 28, 1896, their destination being Kun San in the Province of Chulla.

This is the "devoutly wished consummation" of a long series of trips and a great deal of preaching and medical work in that district. They expect to occupy two small Korean houses right down in the village, until able to build on some higher ground near by. Through the kindly efforts of friendly officials and the courtesy of the Korean Government, permission has been granted to occupy temporarily some vacant buildings on a hill-top. This is quite a boon to health and comfort for the summer.

Yi Ha Yung, Governor of the Metropolitan district, was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Korea to Japan. Minister Yi left Seoul on April 5 for his new post. Mr. Yi was second secretary of the Legation at Washington in 1887 when Pak Chung Yang, the present Acting Prime Minister was Minister to Washington. We may also mention that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yi Wan Yong, was then First Secretary of the Legation.

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES.—The Government is to be congratulated on the success attending the departure from old ruts. In its English Department, under former masters as well as under the present masters, W. du Flon Hutchison, Esq., and T. E. Hallifax, Esq., it has done work the value of which will become more and more apparent as time passes. In October last a distinct advance was made by the appointment of M. Martel to the mastership of the French department. There are at present twenty-three scholars studying French. Even in the short time that has elapsed since the classes were opened, several have shown themselves apt students, having made most satisfactory progress in the language of *La belle France*.

The *Independent* of the 11th inst. says. "The *Japan Mail* of March 28th, quotes the *Jiji* as saying in regard to the objections to sending Japanese troops into the interior of Korea for the purpose of quelling disturbance. 'There was a probability that should the circumstances resulting in the murder of those unfortunate Japanese be minutely inquired into, various complications might have been disclosed such as would have hampered Japan in calling to account the authorities ostensibly responsible for the cruel incidents'. After reading the Official Report on the events of Oct. 8, 1895, we quite agree with the *Jiji* that minute inquiry had better be dispensed with."

CABINET CHANGES.—*The North China Herald* some time ago told its readers that, "There is more excitement in being a Cabinet Minister in Seoul than even in Paris. Changes come quite as often and there is the additional chance of being killed at the first crisis."

Here is the record for the first year, from Dec. 17, 1894 to Dec. 17 1895. In the Premiership, three changes; Department of Home Affairs, five; Justice, two; Foreign, none; Education, four; Finance, three; War, six; Agriculture and Commerce, three. The shortest period during which a portfolio was held was one day. Eighteen different persons were members of the Cabinet during the year.

We are informed by private letter that the Japanese troops stationed in Wonsan went out about 80 li where they met the Korean insurgents, of whom fifty-five were killed, a number wounded and a few taken prisoners. When the news, thro Madam Rumor, first reached us here it was that the Koreans, 10,000 strong, had swooped down upon and cleaned out the Japanese in Wonsan and killed one or two foreign missionaries as by-play! Will not our friends kindly inform us hereafter when they are killed?

The Ladies of The Seoul Union, under the leadership of Mrs. Graham, gave a series of popular Friday afternoon teas in the rooms of the Union during the winter. At these teas there were readings, recitations, music, and other forms of entertainment and amusement. At the last one, the months and seasons of the year were represented in pantomime by the children and several others, "children of larger growth," while the verses, specially composed for the occasion, were read by the author, the Hon. J. M. B. Sill. The local references in the poem were very good, as when March says,

"I send my winds down into the street,
For frolic and roaring fun;
They knock off hats, and they jerk at cloaks,
And monkey with every one."